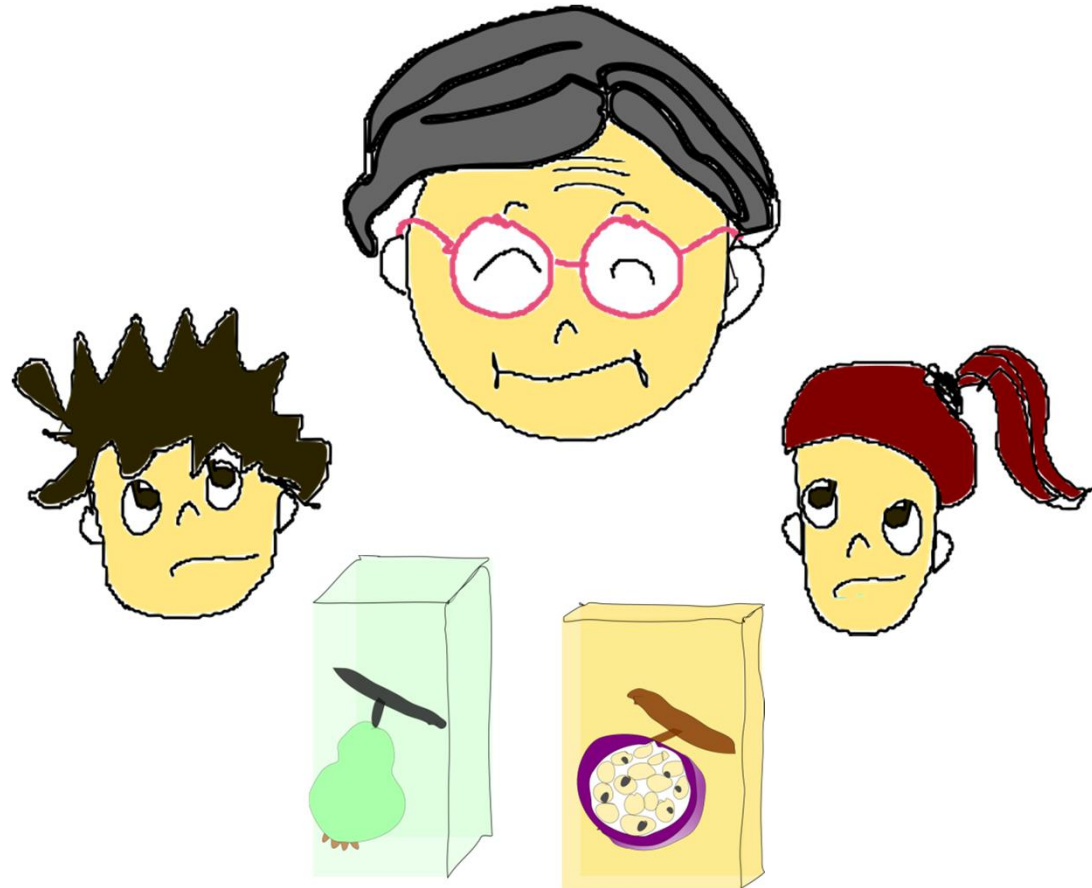


Who Gets More or Less? Does It Matter?



by Lixin Luo

To my grandmas
Whose smiles I miss



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Made in Edmonton, AB, Canada

Ali and Sally like to compete.
They both want to rank at the top.



Ali and Sally love visiting Grandma Chuchu.
She always has something fun to do.

Grandma Chuchu likes to share exotic snacks.

Ali always tries to get more than Sally.
Grinning wider, telling a joke,
pretending to be starving, helping out
with housework ...

Ali has tried many ways.

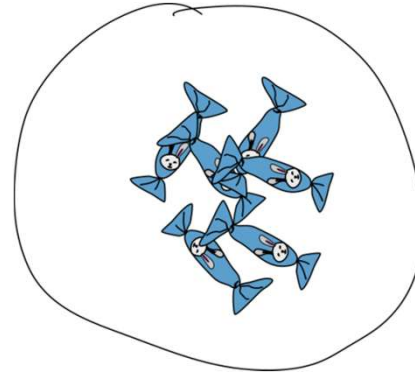
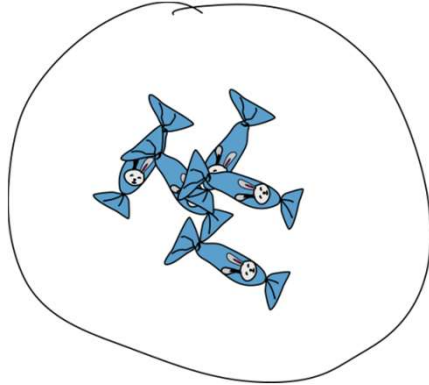
They don't always work.

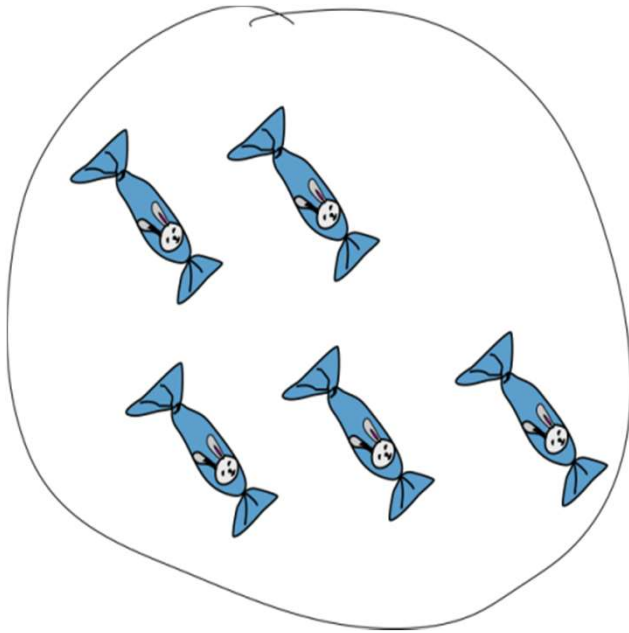
Grandma Chuchu plays tricky games.



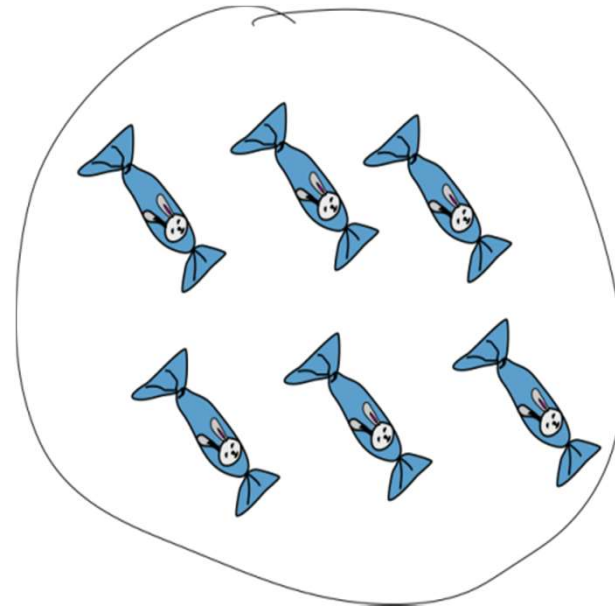
One day Grandma Chuchu gives them each a handful
big rabbit candies,
one of her childhood favorites back in China.

Who gets more?





Ali counts five.



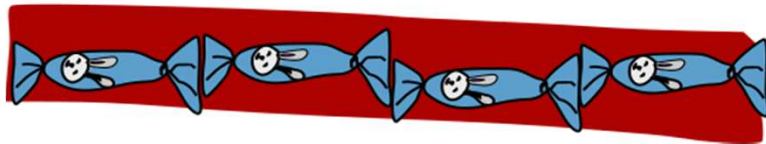
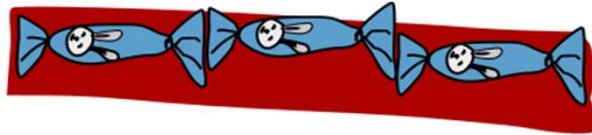
Sally counts six.

“But, Grandma...” Ali is about to complain.
Grandma Chuchu stops him and hands them each a haw strip,
a tangy sweet that goes well with bitter Chinese medicine.

Which haw strip is longer?



The rabbit candies come in handy.
Ali's haw strip is three candies long.
Sally's haw strip is more than three candies long.
Oh, actually, it is four candies long!
Sally giggles.



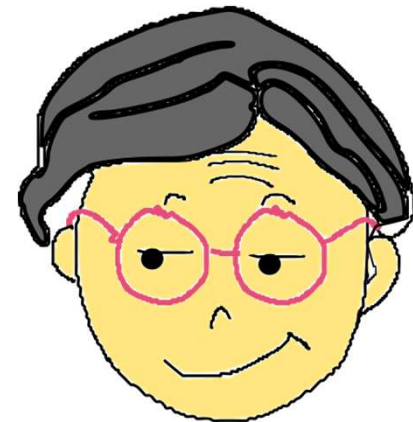
Grandma!" Ali protests.

"Oops!" Grandma Chuchu grabs the two haw strips and chops some off from Sally's with her big cleaver.

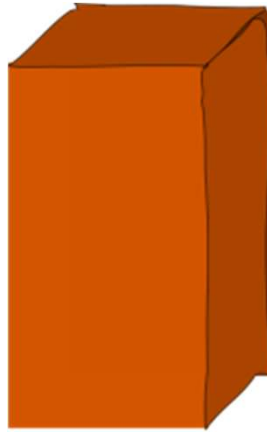
"There you have it," Grandma Chuchu exclaims,
"two strips exactly the same!"
Sally rolls her eyes and says nothing.



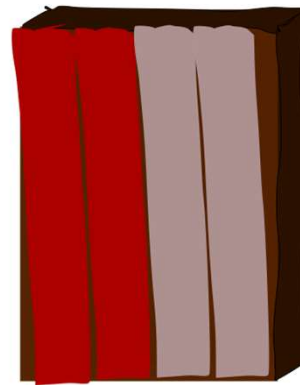
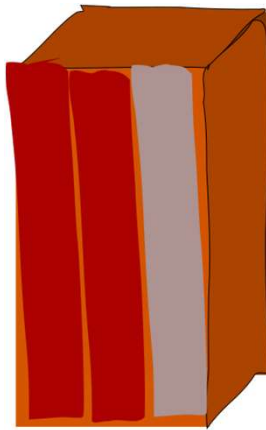
“But, Grandma...” Ali is not done.
Grandma Chuchu stops him and gives them
two chocolate blocks, one made in Kenya
Africa and the other from Costa Rica Central
America.



Which chocolate block is bigger?

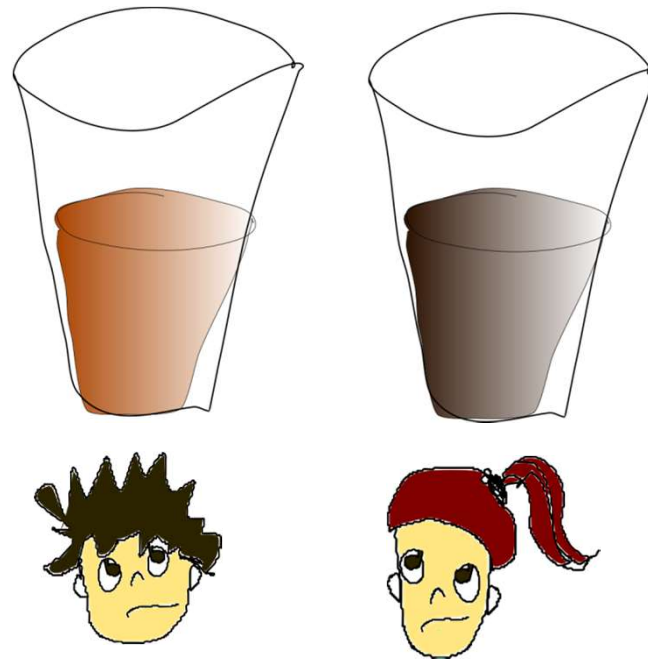


The haw strips come in handy.
Ali's chocolate block is as big as three haw strips.
Sally's chocolate block is as big as four haw strips.

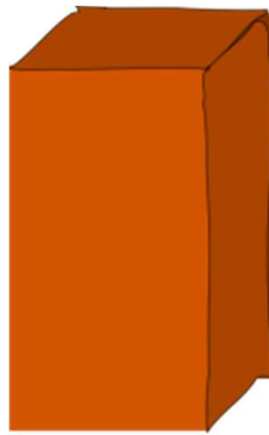


“What? Not again!” Ali stamps his feet.
Grandma Chuchu grabs the two blocks and heats
them up in two glasses of the same size.
Ali’s and Sally’s jaws drop.
The melted chocolate in two glasses is the same!

How could this be?



Oh, Ali's chocolate block is thicker.



“But, grandma ...” Ali is still short of candies.
Grandma Chuchu stops him and passes Ali a box of
guava juice from Mexico, and Sally a can of passion
fruit juice from Brazil.

Who gets more juice?



Ali and Sally pour their juice into two different bowls of the same kind.



Ali's bowl has less juice.
Sally happily whistles.

“Why me? Again?” Ali is about to cry.

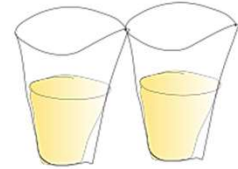
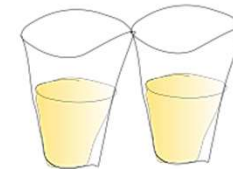
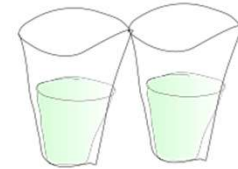
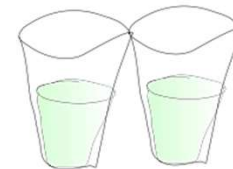
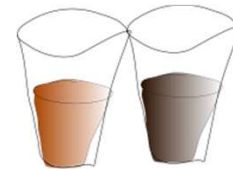
Grandma Chuchu pours the juice in each of the bowl into a few glasses of the same size.

Ali’s juice fills four glasses.

It is as much as four glasses of melted chocolate.

Sally’s juice fills four glasses too.

“No way!” Ali and Sally are confused.



Grandma Chuchu laughs.
She turns Ali's and Sally's bowls
upside down.



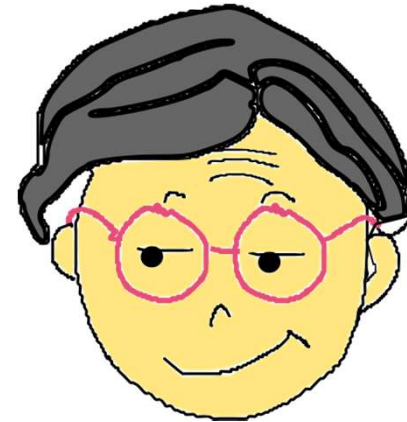


Oh, Sally's bowl has a HIGHER bottom.

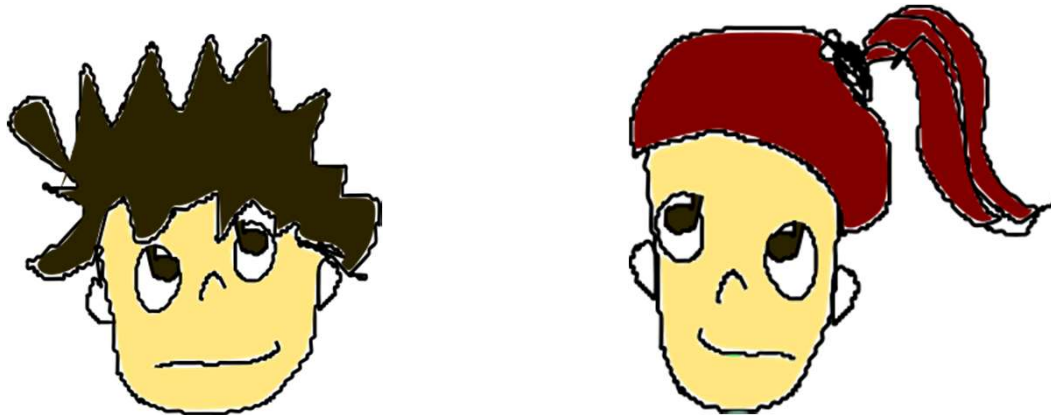
“Aha!” Ali and Sally are impressed.
But then they are not so pleased.
“This is NOT funny, Grandma.”



Grandma Chuchu smiles and says
“Well, my children, many things are complex,
more than what one measurement can say.
You two can compare,
but don’t need to always compete.
As you will know, sooner or later,
not everything can be compared,
nor do all comparisons matter.
Many things are just different.
Neither is better.”



Grandma's words sound deep.
Ali and Sally don't fully understand.
But maybe grandma is right:
"Who gets more or less" doesn't always matter.

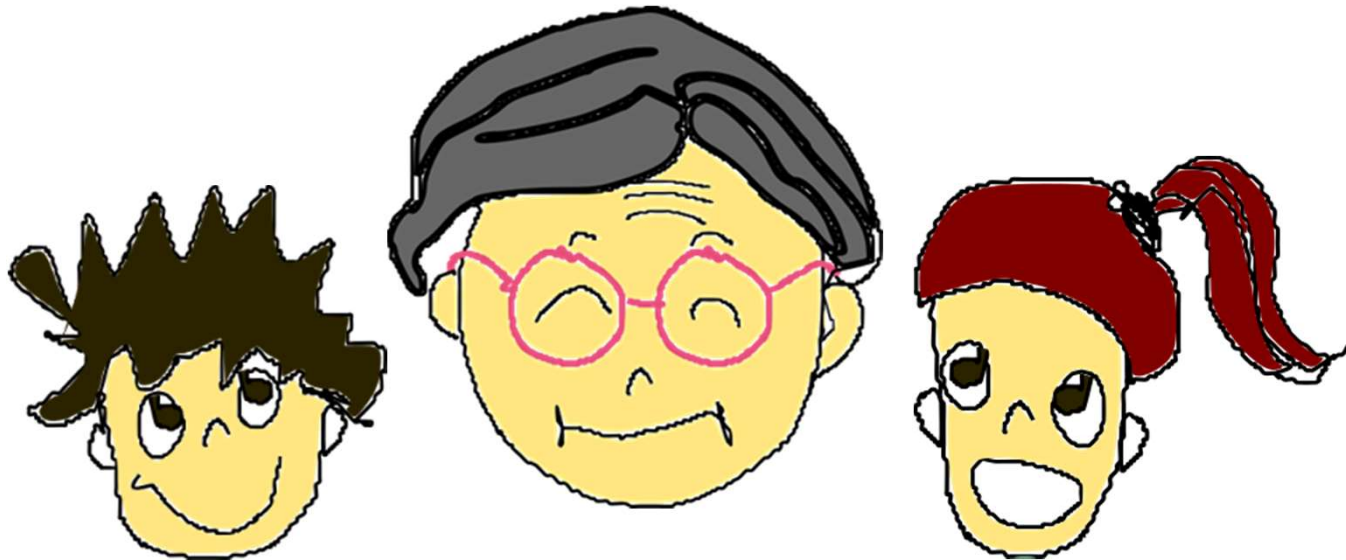


Ali is shorter than Sally, but he is more energetic.
Sally does things slower than Ali, but she is more determined.
Ali would not want Sally's dark chocolate even if hers is bigger.
Sally would not trade her passion fruit juice with Ali's guava juice even if he has more.

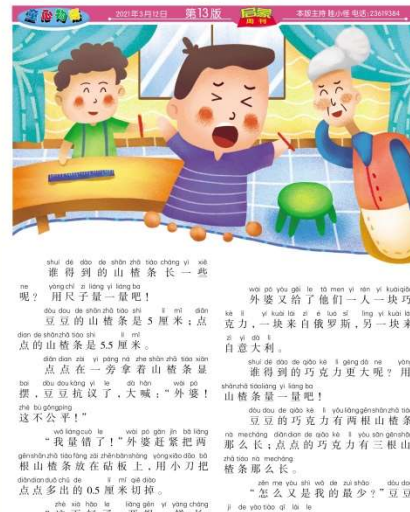
Ok, maybe a little bit if he puts some whipped cream on the top.



Sometimes being different is what really matters.



A revision of the story has been published in Chinese



Luo, L. (2021, March 12). Shui duo shui shao bu zhong yao 谁多谁少不重要 [It doesn't matter who gets more or less]. 深圳青少年报（启蒙周刊）[Shenzhen Youth and Children's Newspaper].